

Innovation Award Use of Funds Report

Title: “¡Si se puede!”¹: Student Success Measures That Work at California State University, San Marcos

1. **Name of the Coordinating Institution:** California State University, San Marcos
2. **Award Amount:** \$2,500,000
3. **Amount of Funds Proposed for Expenditure by the Coordinating Institution:** \$2,500,000

Narrative:

California State University, San Marcos’s (CSUSM) Use of Funds Proposal for “¡Si se puede!”²: Student Success Measures that Work at California State University, San Marcos” embraces the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education priorities. With the award funds, CSUSM’s Office of Undergraduate Studies (OUGS) will work collaboratively with our faculty, staff, and students across campus and with our off-campus participants to design and launch the Academic Success Center led by Academic Success Coaching teams. These coaching teams will directly support all undergraduate students with a focus on first-year, sophomore, and transfer students.

Faculty, staff, and students will work together as the coaching teams.³ The teams will liaise between the college and programs such as First-Year Programs, Transfer Success, campus learning centers that support underrepresented unique groups on campus (e.g., EOP, CAMP, and ACE Scholars), our Awards for Innovation coordinating partners, and more. The faculty/staff/student coaching teams will strengthen the undergraduate academic experience at CSUSM through activities such as the following:

- Facilitating major-specific mentoring and advising;
- Partnering with the Faculty Center to facilitate faculty/student mentorships for lower- and upper-division students;
- Creating peer-to-peer mentors for CSUSM students and between CSUSM and neighboring community-college students;
- Working with our Division of Community Engagement to facilitate student pathways to service learning and internship opportunities;

¹ “It can be done!”

² “It can be done!” When students arrive on campus at CSUSM, they are greeted by a bronze statue of Mexican-American civil rights activist and icon, Cesar Chavez. “Si se puede,” one of the rallying cries of the United Farm Worker movement, is on a plaque at his feet.

³ Including students on these teams is a culture-changing HIP with positive impact. See the following: Metz, Cuseo, & Thompson (2013). *Peer-to-peer leadership: Transforming student culture*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Whitman, N. A. (1988). *Peer teaching: To teach is to learn twice*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 4. Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education.

- Liaising with the campus Career Center, Office of Internships, and college-specific initiatives to connect students to non-profit organizations and for-profit industries in the region and to facilitate visits back and forth for students and organizational/industry leaders;
- Designing and launching workshops and interventions to address the unique academic needs of student groups as identified in our data analysis;
- Providing targeted proactive coaching for prospective transfer students from our neighboring community colleges (e.g., faculty/staff/student coaching teams will plan Preview Days for Prospective STEM or arts transfer students);
- Hosting guest lectures by, with, and for CSUSM and community college faculty, staff, and students; and
- Designing and launching workshops that bring together CSUSM and community college faculty with an eye towards programmatic curricular revisions that engender seamless transitions for community college students who are transferring to CSUSM.

These Academic Success Coaching Teams represent a one-time organizational paradigm shift that directly supports students and fully leverages projects that OUGS is currently launching to support students' academic success, namely the High-Impact Practice (HIP) and the Predictors of Students' Academic Success and Struggle initiatives. With the HIP project, we are on a path to increase all students' access to teaching and learning practices that enhance the quality of their learning while reducing their need to repeat courses. With the Predictors' project, we are working collaboratively with Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS) to build a database tool that will allow the coaching teams to identify academic predictors of students' success and struggle for student groups. Faculty/staff/student teams will then develop data-informed programs to support students' academic success. The Awards for Innovation make it possible to create the infrastructure in OUGS that will allow CSUSM to utilize fully the results of the HIP and Predictors initiatives in support of students' academic success while adding an important HIP—proactive academic coaching.

CSUSM strives to create a campus community dedicated to serving our undergraduate students, especially our most at risk students, on their pathway to graduation. Committed to the Awards for Innovation priorities, CSUSM's Coaching Teams will increase the number of degrees awarded (**goal 1**) by increasing the 4- and 6-year graduation rates (**goal 2**), by closing the 6-year achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students (**goal 3**), and by maintaining our impressive retention rates (**goal 4**). The Academic Coaching Teams will embrace the following **sub-goals** as they work towards our larger **goals**: **sub-goals 1 and 2**: Decrease the number of unnecessary units that first-year and transfer students take;⁴ and **sub-goal 3**: Increase the number of HIPs students complete. While HIPs are beneficial to all students, there appear to be added benefits for traditionally underserved students.⁵

⁴ At CSUSM, we define first-year students as those matriculated students who have not yet achieved sophomore status.

⁵ See LEAP's "Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices": https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/assessinghips/AssessingHIPS_TGGrantReport.pdf (19). Notably, students who participate in at least two HIPs as undergraduates are more likely to complete their degrees. These

Furthermore, CSUSM is a growing campus. By 2023, we expect to be a large campus with 25,000 students. To ensure an experiential, engaged learning experience that results in graduation for all of our students, especially our most at-risk, we must scale-up HIPs. Without intentional planning that is mindful of our students' learning experiences, CSUSM could risk becoming another large, regional campus where students are easily lost in the shuffle. We have a responsibility to prevent that experience. By scaling-up HIPs with Academic Success Coaching Teams, CSUSM will advance the educational level of all of our students, including our most at-risk, while also maintaining a small-campus feel where faculty, staff, and students work closely together.

How will the Awards Innovation Funds be used?

Total: \$2,500,000

1. Year 1—2015/16 \$835,000

- \$280,000: Renovate existing campus space to create the Academic Success Center which will include Academic Success Coaching offices and a center for students, faculty, and staff workshops and learning activities
- \$340,000: Hire Academic Success Coaches (includes benefits)
- \$120,000: Hire an associate dean who reports to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and oversees the Academic Success Center and coaching teams
- \$ 95,000: Operating costs including faculty time and peer-to-peer student consultants

2. Year 2—2016/17 \$555,000

- \$360,000: Academic Success Coaches
- \$120,000: Associate Dean
- \$ 95,000: Operating costs including faculty time and peer-to-peer student consultants

3. Year 3—2017/18 \$555,000

- \$360,000: Academic Success Coaches
- \$120,000: Associate Dean
- \$ 95,000: Operating costs including faculty time and peer-to-peer student consultants

4. Year 4—2018/2019 \$555,000

- \$360,000: Academic Success Coaches
- \$120,000: Associate Dean
- \$ 95,000: Operating costs including faculty time and peer-to-peer student consultants

How is this model sustainable?

finding are important given the demographics of our campus. We are an Hispanic Serving Institution and an Asian American, Native American, Pacific Islander Serving Institution. More Native American students earn undergraduate degrees at CSUSM than at any other institution in the country. More than 52% of our most recent graduating class were the first in their families to complete a college degree. Some 44% of our students are underrepresented minorities (URM); 45% are Pell Grant eligible; 11% are veterans, active duty, or dependents (highest per capita in the CSU system; and nearly 60% of our incoming students require remediation in math and/or English.

The Awards for Innovation funds make it possible to launch an Academic Success Center supported by Academic Success Coaching Teams. These student-centered teams will be sustained by the savings described in our Awards for Innovation in Higher Education Application. Academic Success Coaching Teams will ensure data-informed, proactive academic support, guidance, and advising to students. Therefore, students will be less likely to enroll in courses that do not count towards graduation. These coaching teams are a HIP. Additionally, the coaching teams will encourage student participation in additional HIPs, for all undergraduate students including first-year, transfer, and our most at-risk student groups. By increasing student participation in HIPs, we reduce the number of units that students repeat and the number of units that do not count towards graduation. A reduction by an average of 2 or 3 units in the number of units taken upon graduation translates into a significant reduction in total number of units (10 or more) for a large group of students.

Students graduate on average with 134 completed units, fourteen (14) more than required. With a benchmark for improvement of an average of at least 2 less units not counting towards graduation, the impact is significant and is computed as follows: A 2 to 3 unit reduction out of a total of 134 units is approximately a reduction of 2%, **which would then free-up 2% of the institution's instructional budget or \$1.6 million.** This institutional savings represents the resources CSUSM will use to sustain our proposed Academic Success Coaching Teams.

4. Amount of Funds Transferred to Participants: None

5. Revised Abstract

Title: “¡Si se puede!”⁶: Student Success Measures That Work at California State University, San Marcos

California State University, San Marcos (CSUSM) strives to create a campus community dedicated to serving our undergraduate students, especially our most at risk students, on their pathway to graduation. Our decision-making is guided by these **four undergraduate student goals**: 1: Increase the number of degrees awarded; 2: Increase the 4- and 6-year graduation rates; 3: Close the 6-year achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students; and 4: Maintain our impressive retention rates.

Thanks to the intentional design of several high-impact practices, all of our students, including our most at-risk, have access to pathways to academic success. Notably, committed to serving students in need, CSUSM's First-Year Program's and Student Affairs' collaboration has generated impressive results. CSUSM has essentially erased the one-year retention achievement gap for both underrepresented minority (URM) students and first-generation college students, a leading indicator for reducing the achievement gap in degree completion or graduation. Furthermore, our first-year seminar course (GEL 101) has leveled the academic playing field for our most at-risk students: 1. URM, 2. First-Generation, and 3. Academically at-risk students (non-proficient in English or math). Students who successfully complete GEL 101 graduate. The success of this collaboration represents a model for our forthcoming Sophomore and Transfer Success Programs.

⁶ “It can be done!”

6. Contact Information

Coordinating Institution—**California State University, San Marcos**

Contact Person's Name and Title—Graham Oberem, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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List of Participants

1. North County Professional Development Federation: (NCPDF): Brenda Hall
2. North County Higher Education Alliance (NCHEA): Steven Deineh
3. AVID for Higher Education—Betty Krohn
4. Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association: Denis Turner
5. County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services: Debra Zanders-Willis

7. Contact Information for Sending the Award Check

a. Thank you for making the check payable to **California State University San Marcos**

b. Thank you for sending the check to the following address:

Office of the Provost

California State University San Marcos

333 S. Twin Oaks Valley Road

San Marcos, CA 92096-0001



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April 9, 2015

Innovation Awards Committee
Department of Finance
State of California
915 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Review Committee,

On behalf of California State University San Marcos (CSUSM), I thank you for honoring our campus with an Innovation in Higher Education Award. I am thrilled by the success of our first-year students, thanks in large part to the design of First-Year Programs (FYP) at CSUSM. We look forward to extending the programmatic design of FYP so that we can better serve the needs of all of our undergraduate students, especially our sophomore and transfer students.

It is with enthusiasm that I support the proposed use of funds (attached).

Sincerely,

Karen S. Haynes, Ph.D.
President

KSH/GO/mab